

## Message Text

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ACTION ACDA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 H-02 INR-07 IO-13  
L-03 NSAE-00 OIC-02 OMB-01 PA-02 PM-04 PRS-01  
SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 TRSE-00 DODE-00 NSC-05 /095 W  
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R 121737Z MAY 77

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2765  
INFO ERDA WASHDC  
ERDA GERMANTOWN MD  
AMEMBASSY BONN  
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS  
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN  
AMEMBASSY DUBLIN  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG  
AMEMBASSY MADRID  
AMEMBASSY ROME  
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE  
USMISSION EC BRUSSELS  
USMISSION NATO

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, TECH, PARM, FR

SUBJECT: FRENCH NUCLEAR POLICY

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT A SECTION OF Giscard's RECENT INTERVIEW ENTITLED "ENERGY AND NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION" (LE MONDE, MAY 7) AS WELL AS THE FORMAL ANNOUNCEMENT ISSUED BY THE ELYSEE AFTER THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS ON NUCLEAR EXPORT POLICY OF THURSDAY, MAY 5, WOULD BE OF INTEREST TO DEPT AND ADDRESSEE POSTS. IN THE INTERVIEW, Giscard REITERATES THAT FRANCE IS COMMITTED TO AN INDEPENDENT ENERGY POLICY WHICH WILL ATTEMPT TO HELP SATISFY

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WORLD ENERGY NEEDS WHILE TRYING TO AVOID PROLIFERATION TO THE MAXIMUM EXTENT POSSIBLE. ACCORDING TO HIM, THE NEW US POLICY STATES WHAT THE US WILL DO, BUT IT IS NOT CLEAR WHETHER THE US IS WAITING FOR OTHER COUNTRIES TO ADOPT THE SAME POLICY. FRANCE WILL CONTINUE WITH FUEL REPROCESSING AND THE BREEDER PROGRAM. THERE WILL BE A POSITIVE APPROACH TO NONPROLIFERATION EXEMPLIFIED

BY THE RECENTLY ANNOUNCED ENRICHMENT PROCESS. ALSO WITH RESPECT TO REPROCESSING, IT IS WITHOUT DOUBT POSSIBLE TO DEFINE OPERATIONS WHICH WILL MAKE THE RESULTING PLUTONIUM UNSUITABLE FOR ARMS FABRICATION BY SMALL GROUPS. END SUMMARY.

2. BEGIN TEXT: QUESTION: IN LONDON YOU WILL MEET PRESIDENT CARTER AND YOU WILL CERTAINLY TALK WITH HIM AND OTHER LEADERS ABOUT SOME PROBLEMS WHICH THE NEW AMERICAN ADMINISTRATION HAS MADE, ESPECIALLY HIS NUCLEAR PROGRAM, PERHAPS THEREAFTER THE NEW ENERGY PROGRAM...

Giscard: CONCERNING THE ENERGY PROGRAM, I WROTE PRESIDENT CARTER SOON AFTER HE TOOK OFFICE TO DRAW HIS ATTENTION TO THE FACT THAT THE ABSENCE OF AN ACTIVE ENERGY POLICY IN THE US WORKED AGAINST OUR OWN EFFORTS TO BRING THE SITUATION FURTHER INTO EQUILIBRIUM IN THE ENERGY MARKET. YOU KNOW THE FIGURES FOR INCREASING OIL IMPORTS TO THE US. THIS IS SO IMPORTANT THAT, ON THE GENERAL EQUILIBRIUM LEVEL OF OIL TRADE, OUR OWN EFFORT TO RESTRICT CONSUMPTION IS MORE THAN CANCELLED BY THE DEVELOPMENT OF AMERICAN IMPORTS. I GOT A REPLY FROM PRESIDENT CARTER IN MARCH IN WHICH HE TOLD ME THAT IN EFFECT HE AGREED WITH MY VIEWS AND WAS PREPARING AN OVERALL PROGRAM. WE WILL NOT DISCUSS HIS PROGRAM ESPECIALLY BECAUSE IT MUST PASS THROUGH THE REQUIRED TESTS, PARTICULARLY IN CONGRESS. BUT WE HAVE NOTED THE FACT THAT THERE IS A DESIRE FOR A PROGRAM TO DEVELOP NEW SOURCES OF ENERGY ON THE ONE HAND AND TO RESTRAIN CONSUMPTION ON THE OTHER BY ALL KINDS OF

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MEANS. WE ARE DELIGHTED WITH THIS EFFORT AND I CAN SAY THAT AT THIS MOMENT THERE ARE TWO COUNTRIES THAT HAVE AN ACTIVE ENERGY POLICY, EACH IN ITS OWN WAY, AND THEY ARE THE US AND FRANCE. THE SECOND POINT IS THE NUCLEAR MATTER, OR BETTER, THE PROLIFERATION MATTER. THERE I REALIZE THAT THERE IS A LARGE PROBLEM OF INFORMING POLITICAL AND INTELLECTUAL CIRCLES IN FRANCE ABOUT THE REALITY OF THE FRENCH NUCLEAR POLICY. I HAVE ALSO OBSERVED IT IN NEWSPAPERS WHICH JUDGE ONE OR ANOTHER OF OUR SPECIFIC DECISIONS. I NOTED THAT WITHIN OUR GOVERNMENTAL RESOURCES THERE IS NO APPROPRIATE INSTRUMENT AND THAT UP TO LAST SUMMER DECISIONS HAD BEEN TAKEN IN AN UNCOORDINATED MANNER. WE DID NOT HAVE A CENTRAL ORGANIZATION FOR DECISION-MAKING.

3. WE HAVE DEFINED OUR POSITION IN TWO PERIODS: FIRST IN SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER AND THEN IN DECEMBER, AND YOU SHOULD SEE THESE LINES CLEARLY. OUR POSITION IS BASED

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R 121737Z MAY 77

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS  
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ON THREE ORIENTATIONS:

L) FRANCE HAS A NATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY POLICY  
WHICH IT HAS FORMULATED INDEPENDENTLY. IT WILL CONTINUE  
TO MAINTAIN CONTROL OF ITS OWN NUCLEAR POLICY.

2) THE WORLD'S ENERGY NEEDS ARE SUCH THAT A GREAT  
NUMBER OF COUNTRIES WILL BE LED TO SUPPLY THEMSELVES  
WITH ELECTRIC ENERGY OF NUCLEAR ORIGIN. THIS IS A  
LEGITIMATE NEED ON THEIR PART.

3) THE WAY IN WHICH ATOMS ARE USED IN INDUSTRY  
MUST BE SUCH THAT IT AVOIDS NUCLEAR PROLIFERA-  
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TION TO THE MAXIMUM POSSIBLE EXTENT. FRANCE FEELS THIS IS ONE OF THE CALAMITIES OF OUR TIME.

4. THE AMERICAN POLICY CONSISTS IN STATING FIRST WHAT THEY ARE GOING TO DO. WHAT IS NOT CLEAR IS WHETHER THEY ARE STATING THIS FOR THEMSELVES OR FOR THE WORLD. THEY SAY, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT THEY WILL STOP CONSTRUCTION OF REPROCESSING PLANTS AND DEVELOPMENT OF BREEDERS. DOES THAT MEAN THAT THEY ARE WAITING FOR OTHER COUNTRIES TO ADOPT THE SAME POLICY, OR IS THAT A CONTRIBUTION THEY BRING NATIONALLY TO THE WORLD NONPROLIFERATION EFFORT? THIS POINT NEEDS TO BE CLARIFIED.

5. ON EACH OF THESE QUESTIONS FRANCE HAS PRECISE OPINIONS. CONCERNING REPROCESSING, YOU ARE AWARE THAT WE HAVE AN INDUSTRIAL REPROCESSING PLANT AND THAT FOR A NATION LIKE FRANCE AND THE COUNTRIES WE WORK WITH OUR REPROCESSING DOES NOT IN THE LEAST BIT LEAD TO PROLIFERATION BECAUSE WE ARE ALREADY A NUCLEAR WEAPONS STATE. WE INTEND TO CONTINUE WITH OUR REPROCESSING. WE DO NOT UNDERSTAND, FURTHERMORE, HOW IT IS POSSIBLE FOR ANY GROUP OF COUNTRIES TO DEAL WITH THE NUCLEAR WASTE PROBLEM WITHOUT REPROCESSING. THE ADVANTAGE OF REPROCESSING IS THAT IT BETTER REDUCES THE DIMENSIONS AND THE DANGER OF NUCLEAR WASTES. THIS LEADS TO THE CONCLUSION THAT WE CANNOT SEE HOW IT CAN BE PHYSICALLY POSSIBLE FOR THERE TO BE NO REPROCESSING IN PARTS OF THE WORLD WHERE THERE ARE ACTIVE NUCLEAR WASTES.

6. AS FOR THE BREEDERS, THEIR WORK IS NOT, AS SOME BELIEVE, TO REMAKE COMBUSTIBLE MATERIAL -- THAT WOULD BE A SORT OF PERPETUAL MOTION -- BUT TO ALLOW THE COMPLETE UTILIZATION OF URANIUM PRESENT IN NATURAL URANIUM. WITH RESPECT TO THE CLASSIC USES YOU MULTIPLY BY ABOUT FIFTY THE ENERGY YOU CAN GET FROM NATURAL URANIUM.

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NOW THE PROBLEM OF THE WORLD SUPPLY OF NATURAL URANIUM IS ONE WHICH WILL SOON PRESENT ITSELF, ESPECIALLY AFTER THE YEARS 1985-90. CAN YOU RENOUNCE A PRIORI THE USE OF TECHNIQUES WHICH MULTIPLY BY FIFTY THE ENERGY POTENTIAL NOW AVAILABLE? THIS IS NOT A DECISION WE CAN TAKE WITHOUT HAVING ANALYZED ALL ITS CONSEQUENCES, AND FOR A COUNTRY LIKE FRANCE, WHICH HAS LIMITED QUANTITIES OF NATURAL URANIUM AND WHICH WILL THEREFORE DEPEND ON ITS SUPPLY FROM OTHER SOURCES ABROAD, IT IS CLEAR THAT WE MEAN TO FOLLOW OUR BREEDER TECHNOLOGY.

7. DO DECISIONS LIKE THIS ALLOW US TO CONSIDER BETTER  
WHAT WAS DONE IN THE PAST ABOUT THE DANGER OF PROLIFERA-  
TION? I WOULD ANSWER YES, BY WHAT I WOULD CALL A  
POSITIVE APPROACH, WHICH CONSISTS IN LOOKING AT WHAT  
TECHNIQUES AND SAFEGUARDS OF ALL KINDS PERMIT US TO  
MEET EQUIPMENT NEEDS FOR NUCLEAR ELECTRICITY, WHILE  
REDUCING OR ELIMINATING PROLIFERATION RISKS. ONE  
EXAMPLE, WHICH WE JUST ANNOUNCED, CONCERNS ENRICHMENT.  
THIS ONE, AS YOU KNOW, PRODUCES A CERTAIN QUANTITY OF  
EITHER HIGHLY ENRICHED PLUTONIUM OR HIGHLY ENRICHED  
URANIUM, SUSCEPTIBLE TO MILITARY USES. IN THE TECH-  
NIQUE WHICH FRANCE HAS UTILIZED - AND, MOREOVER, OTHER  
COUNTRIES ARE DOING COMPARABLE RESEARCH - ONE CAN  
ARRIVE AT URANIUM PRODUCTION SUFFICIENTLY ENRICHED  
FOR THE FABRICATION OF ELECTRICITY IN THE PLANTS, WHICH  
IS PRACTICALLY UNUSABLE FOR THE APPLICA-  
TIONS IMPLYING A HIGHER DEGREE OF ENRICHMENT, MEANING  
MILITARY UTILIZATION. ALSO IN THE FIELD OF REPROCES-  
SING, IT IS WITHOUT DOUBT POSSIBLE TO DEFINE  
THE TYPES OF REPROCESSING OPERATIONS, OR IN ANY CASE  
THE OPERATIONS DONE AFTER REPROCESSING, WHICH MAKE  
THE RESULTING PLUTONIUM FROM THIS REPROCESSING UNUSABLE.  
ONE COULD THUS PRACTICALLY ELIMINATE THE RISKS SUCH  
AS THEFT OF NUCLEAR ARMS BY TERRORIST GROUPS OR THEIR  
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FABRICATION BY SMALL GROUPS. THERE ARE  
SOME TECHNIQUES WHICH MAKE PLUTONIUM UNSUITED FOR THIS

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TYPE OF USAGE.

8. SO, RATHER THAN COMMENT ON THE TOTAL PROHIBITION CONTRADICTED BY THE PROBABLE ECONOMIC NECESSITIES OF THIS ERA, AND THUS SUSCEPTIBLE TO THE EFFECT OF THESE SAME NECESSITIES, WE CAN SEARCH FOR A POSITIVE APPROACH DESTINED TO DEFINE TECHNIQUES WHICH LESSEN OR ELIMINATE NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION RISKS.

9. QUESTION: AND HAS THE US TAKEN A VERY FIRM POSITION  
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ON THIS?

GISCARD: IT IS NOT CLEAR. THE AMERICANS HAVE TAKEN A VERY FIRM POSITION ON WHAT CONCERNS THEM. THEY HAVEN'T YET INDICATED WHAT THEIR POSITION WILL BE IN RELATION TO EXISTING INTERNATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS.

10. QUESTION: IS THE SOVIET UNION SHOWING ITSELF STRONGLY IN THE FIELD OF NONPROLIFERATION?

GISCARD: IT HAS UP TO NOW BEEN ACTIVE AND HAS PARTICIPATED, AS YOU KNOW, IN THE WORK OF WHAT WE CALL THE LONDON GROUP. SINCE THE RECENT STATEMENT OF PRESIDENT CARTER, WE HAVEN'T HAD ANY NEWS OF SOVIET REACTIONS ON NUCLEAR PROBLEMS. END TEXT.

11. FOLLOWING IS THE STATEMENT ISSUED BY THE ELYSEE AFTER THE THURSDAY, MAY 5, MEETING OF THE INTERMINISTERIAL COUNCIL ON NUCLEAR EXPORT POLICY. BEGIN TEXT:

THE COUNCIL FOR NUCLEAR EXPORT POLICY EXAMINED NUCLEAR POLICY OF FRANCE IN THE LIGHT OF RECENT INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS. IT CONFIRMED THE GUIDELINES DEFINED DURING THE MEETINGS OF OCTOBER 11 AND DECEMBER 16 WHICH STRESS FRANCE'S DETERMINATION NOT TO AID THE PROLIFERATION OF ATOMIC WEAPONS BUT AT THE SAME TIME TO CONDUCT AN INDEPENDENT NUCLEAR POLICY AND MEET ITS OWN ENERGY NEEDS.

MR. GIRAUD, "ADMINISTRATEUR GENERAL" OF THE ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION, INFORMED THE COUNCIL THAT AFTER SEVERAL YEARS' WORK FRANCE HAS DEVELOPED A NEW URANIUM ENRICHMENT PROCESS WHICH HAS THE ADVANTAGE OF MAKING POSSIBLE THE PRODUCTION OF HIGHLY ENRICHED URANIUM SUITABLE FOR FUELING NUCLEAR PLANTS WHICH CANNOT BE UTILIZED FOR WEAPONS GRADE HIGHLY ENRICHED URANIUM. THE "ADMINISTRATEUR GENERAL" OF THE ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION WILL ANNOUNCE AT THE SALZBURG CONFERENCE THE CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH THIS PROCESS CAN BE THE SUBJECT OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION. END TEXT.

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**TAGS:** PFOR, TECH, PARM, FR, (GISCARD D'ESTAING, VALERY)  
**To:** STATE  
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